



YOUR KINDLE NOTES FOR:

Nihilism and Technology

by Nolen Gertz

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196 Highlights

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 55

technologies can even help us to tailor experiences to our desires.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 61

Using technologies to try to create a problem-free world, a world where we can avoid problematic and undesirable experiences, can also be seen therefore as using technologies to try to create a reflection-free world, a world where we can avoid problematic and undesirable questions.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 134

what is being sold to us is not the technology but a way of life, a way of life that only the advertised technology can make possible.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 137

the role of technologies is to liberate us from the chores that prevent us from having the leisure time we need to be human.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 145

it is increasingly difficult to even determine where technologies end and we begin.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 146

perhaps a mistake to think that technologies could advance independently of humans,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 152

As technologies have always been part of human development, we should not fear what they are doing to us but strive to learn more about them and to take a more active role in their design,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 156

technorealists,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 156

loving or hating technologies is less useful than studying technologies, than engaging with developers and actively participating in the design process.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 163

Modern technologies appear to function not by helping us achieve our ends but instead by determining ends for us, by providing us with ends that we must help technologies achieve.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 166

we become so fascinated with the devices that we develop new needs,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 169

we not only prefer technological solutions to our problems but we increasingly see humans as inefficient, as biased, as problems

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 176

contemporary thinkers accuse thinkers of the past of not understanding what it means to be technological whereas thinkers of the past would accuse contemporary thinkers of not understanding what it means to be human.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 183

leisure as a form of liberation rather than providing us leisure as a form of dehumanization.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 187

For Marx, Capitalist ideology convinces workers that anyone could become wealthy if they only work hard enough when, in reality, workers are exploited by the wealthy and alienated from themselves, from other workers, and from their humanity.[2]

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 190

the wealthy would inevitably fight each other, train the workers to fight their battles against their rivals, and consequently destroy themselves by having inadvertently revolutionized the working class.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 193

Marx's predicted revolution has not taken place,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 195

choosing to destroy ourselves rather than Capitalism.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 197

Nietzsche thought that we are distracted and deluded because we want to be.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 198

internal influences such as our tendency to view life as a source of suffering rather than as a source of challenges that force us to adapt and grow.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 201

what we need to learn to recognize and fight against is not exploitation but nihilism.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 207

seek leisure, not as a way to become more human but as a way to avoid being human.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 210

Christianity

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 210

a value system that defines someone who is bad at being human as good at being moral—back

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 211

our moral values are not based on universal human experience or on pure concepts discovered by reason but are the product of a struggle between competing value systems,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 294

Whereas passive nihilism is leading us to equate human progress with technological progress and to pursue becoming technological posthumans as the goal of human progress, active nihilism can lead us to take a more critical stance toward such goals, to recognize and criticize the ascetic values underlying this techno-human view of progress.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 371

“Who cares?” to express that nobody cares. This is not a question but a challenge, a dare to whoever is listening to find someone who actually cares.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 488

To meditate, to relax, is to not act, to will not to will.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 488

To work is to work for someone else, to bring about what someone else wills, to keep oneself too busy to be aware of one’s own will.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 489

To help is to feel powerful, not by willing but by being recognized for what one has already, for what one has to give to those in need.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 490

To form groups is to compromise one’s will in the service of the will of the many.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 491

To punish is to vent, to use the pretext of justice as a way to exercise one’s will against someone else, as a way to compensate for otherwise having ceased to exercise one’s will.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 509

Nihilism is the “radical repudiation of value, meaning, and desirability,”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 538

transhumanists want to upgrade through technology, or they want to merge with technology.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 541

having a limitless consciousness trapped in a limited body.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 786

The reduction of nature from a godlike force to a controllable energy source is what Heidegger sees as the defining feature of modern technology,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 789

Yet Heidegger points out that this is precisely what is dangerous about the neutralist position, for viewing technology as instrumentality, as instruments for us, is to become blind to how we too have come under the rule of instrumentality,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 827

Heidegger believes that so long as inquiry is possible, so long as we can question the essence of technology, then we can free ourselves from the grip of Enframing.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 828

we would need something that could again motivate and inspire our curiosity,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 829

art.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 933

Postphenomenology

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 933

“human-technology relations.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 935

how, through these relations, humans and technologies become what they are.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 937

how technological beings, in a technological world, come to have meaning in, and through, and for each other.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 964

Through postphenomenology we have arrived at an ontology based not on subjects and objects but on intentional relations,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 974

because technologies have no inherent being outside of intentional relations, there can be nothing inherently fearful or determining about technologies.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1016

Embodiment relations occur when a technology functions for a user like a body part, expanding and extending the physical abilities of users, such that the user experiences empowerment without experiencing the technology that is enabling the empowering.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1025

we can potentially experience embodiment relations with almost any technology,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1026

The specific technology is not therefore what defines an embodiment relation but rather the specific technology's dynamic of revealing and withdrawing in the form of the amplification of our perception and the reduction of our awareness of the technology mediating our perception.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1029

Hermeneutic relations occur when a technology functions for a user like a translator, expanding and extending the interpretive abilities of users, such that the user feels informed without thinking about the technology that is enabling the informing.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1036

The world that we learn about through hermeneutic technologies is a world that we only have access to through hermeneutic technologies, technologies that merge with the world we are attempting to learn about such that the technology and the world become indistinguishable.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1041

Alterity relations occur when a technology functions for a user like an other, like a person or animal, acting independently of the user, expanding and extending the interactive abilities of users, such that the users experience the presence of a seemingly autonomous being without thinking about the technology that is enabling the semblance of autonomy.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1049

alterity relations focus our attention on technologies rather than on the world.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1050

Yet with the disappearance of the world from our concern so too does the nature of the specific technology disappear, leaving us feeling that we are in the presence of a living being rather than a technology created by living beings to simulate the behavior of living beings.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1054

Background relations occur when a technology functions for a user like a part of the environment, operating unnoticed, expanding and extending the attentive abilities of users such that users can pay attention to the world without having to pay attention to the technologies working behind the scenes to enable the user's attentiveness.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1086

while we want the situational changes that technologies provide, we do not necessarily want technologies to have to provide these changes for us.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1092

are well aware of what technologies do, what technologies do to us, for us, and with us, yet we continue to use technologies nevertheless.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1099

technologies that are made not to last but to be replaced,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1101

We continue to use technologies that have the ever-present possibility to belittle us, to betray us, to enrage us, and to incapacitate us, and yet this continued use is done not blindly but willingly.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1102

we willingly make ourselves blind to these possibilities by taking them for granted, by treating them as just the price we must pay in order to be empowered, enlightened, entertained, and enlivened.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1223

What is perhaps shocking is that we are aware of the zombifying effects of staring at screens and yet continue to spend hours on end staring at screens regardless.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1227

If anything it would appear that we like screens precisely because of their zombifying effects. We are exhausted —whether

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1228

and thus we see zoning out in front of a screen for a few hours as something we have earned, as a right as well as a privilege.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1234

designers can view techno-hypnosis as a feature rather than as a fault of their creations.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1246

Watching TV need no longer be a lonely escapist pastime as streaming services and social media have together turned zoning out into a social and engaged activity.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1251

The meaning that we find in seeking Nirvana or binge-watching Netflix points to our ability to devalue the world we live in and reinvest that value into another world, an imaginary world, a world that we create that would allow us to no longer have to be who we are.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1273

if we do not get the message on our own, television provides musical cues and laugh tracks to make sure we feel what television is supposed to make us feel,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1279

the effects of television are rather more a product of the medium than of the maker.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1287

The demands of mass production, of producing on schedule, in accordance with a formula, and by committee rather than by oneself, entails that television not only produces conformity in its audience but also in its creators.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1349

YouTube thus does not exist as a refuge from the assembly-line model of television production but is, rather, the perfection of this model,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1351

YouTube was “groundbreaking” but has since become “genre-defining,”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1370

watching ourselves is what is most comforting

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1371

confirming that how we are living is the right way to live,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1374

comforting in the sense of relaxing us, of helping us to avoid feeling,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1376

rather than feeling uncomfortable, uncomfortable enough to stop watching.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1435

Binge programming thus combines the never-to-be-resolved plot-pacing and character-development of soap operas with the never-to-be-finished content availability and algorithmic curation of YouTube.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1465

It is this desire to find worlds different from our own, better than our own, that leads us to seek out new worlds in books, in television, in film, and in video games.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1573

AR allows us to experience certain aspects of the world while cutting us off from other aspects of the world, making the reality that we experience more fascinating, and making the reality that we do not experience, that we perhaps do not want to experience, more easily forgettable.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1584

a freedom to escape—not a freedom to create—a freedom that is made for users, not by users.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1614

techno-hypnotic technologies can reduce our awareness of the role they play in shaping our ideas.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1727

we live by habits, crave routines, and tend to avoid any spontaneity that does not fit into our preconceived plans of what can count as safely spontaneous.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1735

we busy ourselves with chores precisely because they are mind-numbing, which perhaps might explain why Marx's predicted revolution has not taken place—for fear that we would then indeed have no one else but ourselves to blame for our not finding ourselves, for our not rediscovering our humanity.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1744

technological progress appears to be measured more and more not by the protection of our privacy but by the accuracy of the algorithms' predictions.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1752

The vital question here is whether such “magical levels of personalized service” are achieved by learning who and what we are, or by shaping who and what we are.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1791

Quantification does not only sever action from purpose, it also severs action from actor.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1793

there is no person behind the numbers.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1804

Collecting data about ourselves can thus not only be useful, it can be addictive.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1805

we check our statistics endlessly.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1844

What is at issue here is not that these algorithms claim to know us but that we believe them.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1847

we have no way of knowing whether, and to what extent, such claims are true.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1852

Even if we are aware of such algorithms, we still are not aware of what the algorithms know about us and how this data is being used.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1865

algorithms are able to learn about us, but we are not able to learn about them, and this is an arrangement that we not only accept but actively participate in daily, even when we do try to fight back against it.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1866

Yet more often than not we do not try to fight back.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1920

If algorithms can predict human behavior it is because humans have become predictable.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1939

if algorithms claim to know us, then there is the hope that we can learn from algorithms who we are.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1942

The medieval nihilism of trying to prove that God exists has been replaced with the modern-day nihilism of trying to prove that I exist. If Big Brother, or now Big Data, is watching me, then there must still be a me who exists, a me who is worth watching.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1949

Our having become predictable is the result of a process of manipulation, indoctrination, conditioning, and torture, of “harness, tyranny, stupidity, and idiocy,” but it was at least a human process, something that we did to each other and to ourselves.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1951

What if, as postphenomenology would suggest, algorithms are not only the means by which we achieve our data-driven nihilism but are also actively shaping our data-driven nihilism?

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1956

Though the tools used behind-the-scenes and the beliefs covering over the manipulation and indoctrination have changed, still we are describing how knowledge becomes power.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1957

And still someone must be collecting the data, someone must be writing the algorithms, someone must be benefiting from this obedience.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1965

our fundamental freedoms and opportunities will be outsourced to systems with few discernible values beyond the enrichment of top managers and shareholders.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1979

it's very hard or impossible for the engineers to know for sure that the computer hasn't inadvertently used some piece of evidence which it shouldn't.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1994

we trust algorithms because no one knows how these algorithms work.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 1995

Humans are fallible; hence, the less of a role that humans play in algorithms, the more the aura of infallibility surrounding algorithms grows.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2020

we are becoming more and more aware of the problem of maximum efficiency leading to maximum unemployment and are yet nevertheless continuing to seek maximum efficiency

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2173

Making money off of our bodies is no longer seen as a form of prostitution, as something sad, desperate, morally depraved, but is instead seen as simply good business sense.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2185

Rather than being obsessed with consumerism and ownership, with having access to only that which we can afford to own, the internet makes it possible to have access without ownership.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2206

because we do not actually have the level of trust demanded by the sharing economy, we have asked the internet intermediaries that drive the sharing economy to run background checks, verify social media accounts, and prevent anonymity.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2208

the trust that the sharing economy is built on is not trust of each other but trust of technology.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2209

Trust here comes not from strangers meeting and developing a relationship but from uploading personal information onto a website. In other words, trust comes from data.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2227

Introducing oneself online before introducing oneself in person does not help to build relationships between strangers, it helps to build inequalities between strangers, allowing users to pick and choose, to stereotype and avoid, more than to simply meet and greet.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2403

Dividing who we are from what we do is nihilism. We are what we do.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2404

There is no “real world” different from the “cyber world” but only the world of experience. Maintaining the illusion of these dualisms is central to Tinder’s success, for if we were forced to confront what we are actually doing to ourselves and to each other, we would be forced to recognize that what we find so fun about Tinder is—as I will discuss further in the next section—what Nietzsche describes as the pleasure of cruelty.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2496

if users feel superior thanks to the apps and users feel guilty thanks to the apps, then the true power lies not with the users but with the apps.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2501

we must ask whether we have grown so dependent on apps for feeling superior, for feeling powerful, for feeling pleasure, that we can no longer experience community with others without the mediation of, and dependence on, the apps of pleasure economics.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2548

we join with others, for it is in joining with others, in merging our interests and actions with those of other people around us, that we can overcome our individual weaknesses and replace them with the newfound strength of the whole.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2565

Can one preserve one’s individuality even at the risk of losing one’s followers?

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2612

The CB radio, therefore, started out by promising experimentation and expression but ultimately led to compliance and repetition

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2634

users would consciously or unconsciously learn the habits and tricks of popular users and emulate them in order to avoid being ignored.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2693

whose meaning is being conveyed by emojis.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2695

People cannot create emojis, only corporations can.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2748

no other social network has enforced openness and undermined privacy to the degree that Facebook has.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2749

no other social network has done more to redefine privacy by revealing to us how traditional notions of privacy constrain us, preventing us from connecting to the world, to a better world.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2766

after all of these brazen attacks on privacy, attacks for which Facebook has been forced to retreat and apologize, the number of users continues to steadily increase.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2771

it has sought to provide users an internet within the internet,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2772

let users do nothing without Facebook.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2777

considering that users can post photos and status updates about anyone, one can be on Facebook (as content) without being on Facebook (as a user).

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2779

it is increasingly becoming impossible to have an individual identity without first having a Facebook identity.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2783

while we decry Facebook as a threat to privacy, we are nevertheless using Facebook to peer into the lives of others, to gain access to a steady stream of the day-to-day experiences of others.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2790

Facebook has in other words become what is normal.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2791

Posting personal opinions is normal. Posting intimate photos is normal. Posting your current whereabouts is normal.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2792

In a world dominated by Facebook, a world dominated by openness, to want to maintain privacy is to be closed, to be suspiciously concerned more with cutting oneself off than with sharing with everyone

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2795

it is impossible to determine if we post on Facebook because we want to share our experiences or if we want to have experiences because we want to post on Facebook

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2797

whether Facebook has become a new place to live or a new reason for living.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2799

there is much to be gained from joining a herd: community, strength, security.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2799

the price of the communal identity replacing the individual's identity, the strength of the whole diminishing the need for the strength of the individual, and the security the herd provides becoming a threat against individuals ever taking the risk of leaving the herd.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2819

what we should be on the lookout for here is not what herd networking provides for us but rather how and why herd networking is provided for us.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2833

make the distinction between user-generated content and advertiser-generated content disappear.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2835

the more that the advertisements appear to be for you, the more that the advertisements look like something you chose to have in your network rather than something merely designed to look like something you would choose to have in your network.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2843

the “If you don’t like it, you can quit” dare of social networks makes users increasingly unlikely, and increasingly unable, to bother questioning whether these targeted advertisements are wanted or not.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2848

this erosion is also achieved by networks helping users to target each other, to help users turn into advertisers.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2879

it is difficult to determine whether these trending topics reflect what is currently being most discussed on Twitter or create what is currently being most discussed on Twitter.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2913

the sociality of social networking is increasingly taking place between algorithms, not between people.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 2918

Nietzsche likened nihilism to a disease. And today, fittingly, we call this disease going viral.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3009

Emotional outbursts allow us to avoid feeling the burden of consciousness, the burden of accountability, the burden of powerlessness, and the burden of individuality.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3027

given a how such as a megaphone or a soapbox, we can often find ourselves speaking without knowing necessarily what we are saying, or why.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3028

From the listener's perspective however, there is no way of knowing whether and to what degree the how is leading the what and the why, as all that is known is that someone is making their voice heard,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3035

if the speaker is worth listening to, then we can be led to participate in an orgy of feeling, and if the speaker is not worth listening to, then we can be led to participate in an orgy of feeling.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3038

an opportunity for an outburst.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3085

The need for sublimation, for discharge, for relief, arises, according to Freud and Nietzsche, due to the pressures of living in a society, of being civilized, of being forced to conform to the needs and expectations of others.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3091

the comments in these sections often appear to have little to do with the other comments, little to do with the content of the page, little to do with the author of the page.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3097

perhaps what is truly being objected to is the very existence of the content, of the page, of the internet, of people who feel justified in making their views public, of people who promote the making public of those views, of people who would bother to spend their time reading those views and commenting on those views.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3099

what is truly being objected to is existence.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3117

the internet bring sadists to comments sections, where they can indulge themselves in an environment perfectly suited to their urges.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3124

the question of whether sadists become trolls or trolls become sadists is unclear.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3223

what is nihilistic is the explosiveness of the flash mob. It appears suddenly, with little to no warning, and then disappears.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3243

In the past, social media was a tool for organizing flash mobs. In the present, social media is the flash mob.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3270

“well-meaning people, in a crowd, often take it too far.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3289

Trolling may not be divisive but cohesive.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3295

“forming an anti-social network of sorts” by “befriending other troll profiles.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3296

trolling on social media—unlike trolling in comments sections or on Reddit forums—requires that one have a profile which, even if fake and invented solely for the purpose of trolling, nevertheless gives each troll an online identity stable enough to form relationships.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3309

trolls think of themselves not as sadists but as satirists,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3310

whose means may be cruelty, but whose ends are perceived by them as righteous, revealing the impurities beneath the claimed pure intentions of their targets.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3365

These acts matter because everyone is doing it, and if everyone is doing it, it must be worth doing. These acts do not matter because everyone is doing it, and if everyone is doing it, it must not be anything that I did, that I can be held accountable for, that I need to worry about.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3401

what happens when technologies, rather than ascetic priests, serve to mediate our attempts to cure ourselves of our suffering.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3426

the meaning of life is to keep asking questions

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3426

or, more specifically, to keep buying Apple products so that you can keep asking Siri questions

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3434

Siri has been programmed to make users feel guilty and to tell users how to atone. Siri has been programmed to be an ascetic priest.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3448

ascetic priests' prescription of orgies of feeling resulted in sufferers who "no longer protested against pain" but instead "thirsted for pain" and cried "more pain! more pain!"

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3490

categorizing doxing into three types: deanonymization, targeting, and delegitimization.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3500

Doxing, in its essence, works by turning the benefits of the internet into methods of torture.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3518

Breaking rules is a sign of power, of being more powerful than those who do not break the rules.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3526

doxing invites more doxing, which is why orgies of clicking are not only cyclical but tend to quickly spiral out of control.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3621

Nietzsche seems to be suggesting that we would rather worship a nonexistent God through false idols than leave the cave that we call home and be forced to face the truth of our situation.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3633

The death of God does not refer to a literal deicide, nor to the end of religion, but rather to the death of what God means. God no longer fulfills the role of God, not because science won but because nihilism won.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3638

“What does nihilism mean? That the highest values devalue themselves. The aim is lacking; ‘why?’ finds no answer.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3640

We can only be told “God” as an answer to every “Why?” for so long, we can only be told that we exist because of God, that we suffer because of God, that we die because of God for so long before the answer becomes meaningless.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3647

Once the answer became meaningless, the danger arose that the question itself would become meaningless (“‘why?’ finds no answer”), at which point life would become meaningless

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3651

Faced with the possibility that life is meaningless, we reject “God” as an answer to our questions, but only by replacing “God” with structurally equivalent answers.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3657

For the issue is not our answers but our questions, the need to have someone else tell us what to do and how to live, to tell us our purpose, to tell us that our lives are meaningful, rather than decide for ourselves how to live, rather than create our own purpose, rather than make our lives meaningful in our own way.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3691

The biggest risk—the greatest evil—lies in failing to engineer an effective implementation of its own vision. Don’t be evil is the Silicon Valley version of Be true to yourself. It is both tautology and narcissism.[12]

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3724

we are instead presented only with the illusion of change, of evolution, of disruption. For in reality, as Bogost pointed out, these tech companies are interested in self-perpetuation, not self-overcoming, particularly as genuine disruption of the status quo could result in a genuine disruption of their exalted place in the status quo.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3727

not disruption but distraction,

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3733

For nihilism does not mean that life is meaningless but rather that our search for a transcendent source of meaning, for a source of meaning external to us, external to our lives, results in our lives not being lived.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3737

The high value we attribute to being good does not necessarily result in our being benefited by such goodness, particularly if “being good” requires that we deny our instincts, deny our individuality, and deny what Nietzsche refers to as our “indeterminacy.”

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3748

Ascetic religions manifest and multiply our nihilism because they turn us against life, against the world, and against ourselves, and turn us instead toward lifelessness, toward worldlessness, and toward the supernatural.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3763

tech companies are not wrong to justify their practices by arguing that they are only providing us with what we want.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3784

they also play a vital role in shaping what we think it is even possible to want.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3803

we are increasingly asking technologies to grow and to adapt to the challenges of life so that we do not have to.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3818

we must not try to flee from our technologies or try to somehow get outside of technological mediation, as the belief that such escape is possible merely reinforces the illusion that technologies only influence us so long as we are using them.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3844

We are technomoral creatures to the core; that is, we allow and have always allowed the things we make to reshape us.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3845

deliberate and wise or unreflective and reckless.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3847

For Nietzsche, human progress is shaped by nihilism, for which reason human progress did not begin until the slaves defeated the masters, until ascetic values replaced warrior values, until using self-denial to shape ourselves supplanted using self-expression to shape the world.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3862

Our dissatisfaction with reality, our disappointment with all new realities that technologies have brought into being, can either lead us to destroy ourselves or it can lead us to destroy the values that have put us on this path to self-destruction.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3866

the loss of perspective, of certainty, of orientation that such a death would bring could lead us to simply seek out new Googles rather than new perspectives.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 3891

when we use technologies to try to make people be happier in particular environments rather than questioning why people are not happy in those environments.
